

## **ADOPTION OPPORTUNITIES GRANT**

In October 2001, the Division was awarded an Adoption Opportunities Grant for \$300,000 per year for three years to serve Missouri's waiting children. The purpose of the grant is to increase the number of children adopted from foster care.

The Division is currently in the third and final year of the grant, and continues in its partnership with The Adoption Exchange's Missouri office as the sub-contractor.

The four major objectives of the grant are:

- 1) Collaborate with 30 public and private agencies and foster/adoptive parent associations to increase the number of licensed adoptive families by 20%, devoting new resources to recruitment, program marketing and pre-and post-adoption retention-related services.
  - As of December 31, 2004, roughly 2652 calls have been received through the Foster/Adopt information line. Approximately 2/3 of the calls specific to adoption inquiry and the other 1/3 for information and referral for services.
- 2) Develop and implement a training program for 40 adoptive parents statewide to mentor prospective adoptive parents beginning after initial inquiry and continuing throughout the STARS training process and placement of a special needs child.
  - As of December 31, 2004, 52 individuals/41 families have been trained.
- 3) Recruit and train 70 respite providers to serve adoptive families throughout the state, thereby initiating a respite network.
  - As of December 31, 2004, a total of 69 respite providers have been trained.
- 4) Develop a regional, pilot, cooperative adoption mediation program to train professionals to assist 30 adolescents in making permanency decisions with their prospective adoptive family.
  - As of December 31, 2004, thirty-eight referrals had been received, and eleven had been assigned to Permanency Consultants.

December 31, 2004 was the conclusion of this Adoption Opportunities Grant.